

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the coated leather has a primer layer of an acrylic resin composition or urethane resin composition on the leather and an outermost layer of a fluorine-containing resin coating composition. Claim 15 has been similarly amended to recite the step of coating a primer layer of an acrylic resin composition or urethane leather composition on the leather and then coating a curable fluorine-containing resin coating composition through the primer layer. Support is found, for example, at page 12, line 18 to page 13, line 5 of the specification. The primer layer is advantageous in that it enhances smoothness and uniformity of appearance of the coated leather. Claims 12-14 and 16-18 have been canceled. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5, 7-9 and 11-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,229,461 to Saitoh et al in view of U.S. Patent 4,295,976 to Dessaint et al.

The reason for rejection was that it would have been obvious to apply the coating composition of Saitoh et al to leather because Dessaint et al is said to disclose that material such as metals, plastics, wood, concrete and leather are considered equivalent substrates for application of fluorinated anti-staining coatings.

Applicants traverse, and respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider in view to the amendment to the claims and the following remarks.

Dessaint et al does not disclose use of a primer layer, particularly on leather. Although in Saitoh et al the coating composition can be applied to a coating film of an undercoat such as an acrylic resin, the undercoat is provided on a metal, wood, concrete or plastic (column 11, lines 1-

11 of Saitoh et al). There is no example as to application of an undercoat (primer layer) to leather or otherwise in either of Dessaint et al or Saitoh et al. Furthermore, the skilled artisan would not contemplate application of the primer layer, taught by Saitoh et al on leather. This is because a primer layer for metal, wood, concrete or plastic, as taught by Saitoh et al, would ordinarily render the leather hard.

In summary, there is nothing in the prior art which would lead one of ordinary skill to apply the coating composition of Saitoh et al to leather via a primer layer because (i) when an undercoat is used in Saitoh et al, the undercoat is provided on metal, wood, concrete or plastic, but there is no mention of leather; (ii) Dessaint et al is entirely silent with respect to the use of a primer layer on leather or otherwise; (iii) neither Saitoh et al nor Dessaint et al has a working example which exemplifies use of an undercoat (primer layer) on leather or otherwise; and (iv) one of ordinary skill in any case would not contemplate use of a primer layer of Saitoh et al intended for use on metal, wood, concrete or plastic because such primer layer, in general, would make the leather hard.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the amended claims are patentable over Saitoh et al in view of Dessaint et al, and withdrawal of the foregoing rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of claims 1-5, 7-9, 11, 15 and 19 is earnestly solicited.

In the event that the Examiner believes that it may be helpful to advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number indicated below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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